

**REQUEST FOR QUALIFICATIONS  
# RFQ 0913-0002**

**Project Title:** Limited English Proficient (LEP) Pathway

**Estimated Contract Period:** July 1, 2010 through June 30, 2011. Amendments extending the period of performance, if any, shall be at the sole discretion of DSHS.

**Proposal Due Date:** All Proposals whether mailed or hand-delivered must arrive by 3:00 p.m. Pacific Time on Thursday, February 25, 2010.

**Submit Proposal To:**

**Proposal Delivered by Mail:**  
Charles Barron, RFQ Coordinator  
Department of Social and Health Services  
Community Services Division  
PO BOX 45470  
Olympia, WA 98504-5470

**Proposal delivered by Express / Hand Delivery,  
Or Courier:**  
  
Charles Barron, RFQ Coordinator  
Department of Social and Health Services  
Community Services Division  
712 Pear St SE  
Olympia WA 98501

**Faxed proposals WILL NOT be accepted.  
E-mailed proposals WILL NOT be accepted.**

**DSHS Procurement Website:** <http://www1.dshs.wa.gov/msa/ccs>  
**General Administration WEBS:** <https://fortress.wa.gov/ga/webs/>

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## SECTION A. SUMMARY OF PROJECT

### 1. Purpose of Request for Qualifications

The Washington State Department of Social and Health Services (DSHS) is looking for eligible Bidders (see Section 4) to provide WorkFirst Limited English Proficient (LEP) Pathway program services in the six DSHS regions (see Exhibit E, DSHS Region Map).

The LEP Pathway program provides specialized culturally appropriate services to refugees and WorkFirst parents with limited English proficiency. The goal of the LEP Pathway is to increase an individual's employability and self-sufficiency.

The program is administered by DSHS's Office of Refugee and Immigrant Assistance (ORIA), within the Economic Services Administration (ESA), Community Services Division (CSD).

### 2. Background

#### a. About the Limited English Proficient (LEP) Pathway Program

The LEP Pathway program provides specialized employment services to LEP adults who receive assistance through the Temporary Assistance for Needy Families (TANF), State Family Assistance, or Refugee Cash Assistance programs. Refugees who do not receive cash assistance are also eligible for LEP Pathway program services.

The goal of the LEP Pathway is to increase individuals' employability and self sufficiency. LEP Pathway services include:

- English as a Second Language (ESL),
- Employment,
- Skills Training,
- Work Experience (WEX),
- Community Service (CS),
- Job placement assistance, and
- Job retention.

DSHS administers the LEP Pathway program within Washington. DSHS currently contracts with government agencies, VOLAGs, local technical and community colleges, community based organizations and other organizations statewide and is funded through a mix of federal and state funds from the Administration of Children and Families, Office of Refugee Resettlement (ORR), Federal TANF, and Washington State.

The LEP Pathway program's payment model is performance-based and focuses on getting eligible individuals employed.

b. About WorkFirst

WorkFirst is Washington State's welfare reform program that helps financially struggling families find jobs, get better jobs and build a better life for their children. WorkFirst LEP parents are required to participate in federally mandated core activities a minimum of 20 hours per week. Non core activities can be added to ensure successful participation in WorkFirst activities or to exit from TANF. Full-time participation is the goal.

To learn more about WorkFirst, go to website at: [www.workfirst.wa.gov](http://www.workfirst.wa.gov) or to the WorkFirst Handbook at: <http://www1.dshs.wa.gov/ESA/wfhand>

c. LEP Pathway Indicators of Success

The LEP Pathway program helps LEP adults enter the labor market by providing culturally sensitive, language specific services to program participants. Many LEP adults in the Pathway are refugees who have significant barriers to employment, including a lack of experience with US culture, an inability to communicate in English, and little or no formal education. It is critical to the success of the program that service providers have the capacity to provide services as effectively as possible to this very vulnerable population.

The most successful LEP Pathway providers will maximize key program outcomes that include:

- The number of 30-day job placements
- The number of 90-day job placements
- Wages at job entry
- Placements into jobs that offer health benefits
- The number of Refugee Cash Assistance clients placed into jobs before their cash assistance ends
- The number of TANF recipients who meet WorkFirst participation requirements
- The number of participants in skills training who successfully complete the training
- The number of skills training participants who enter employment in that field
- The number of clients participating in Community Service and/or Work Experience
- The number of clients who find employment within 90 days of participating in a Community Service and/or Work Experience
- The number of ESL language level gains

**3. Project Scope**

- a. The contract period begins July 1, 2010 and goes through June 30, 2011.
- b. DSHS will consider proposals for any of the services as described in the Exhibit D – Sample Statement of Works. Only proposals that can meet and

carry out the Statement of Work requirements that result in gainful employment and/or English language improvement will receive consideration.

- c. Current LEP Pathway contractors interested in continuing to provide services under this RFQ are required to submit a proposal for consideration. There is no guarantee of an award to a current contractor.
- d. Bidders may submit proposals for more than one DSHS region. (See Exhibit E – DSHS Region Map)
- e. Bidders may either submit a proposal on their own or within a consortium but not both. (For example, a Bidder cannot submit a proposal as a primary contractor and be a consortium member for another primary contractor.)
- f. An organization may be a consortium member, or sub-contractor, for more than one primary contractor. The sub-contractor must keep client files and billings separate for each primary contractor, and must not bill for services for the same individual under more than one contract.
- g. Bidders who want to serve as the primary contractor for a consortium must form a consortium within their selected DSHS region(s) and develop plans to provide services to targeted populations in the region(s) they represent. The primary contractor must provide all training, oversight, corrective action, and support for the consortium, as well as be responsible for the billing and invoicing process for the consortium.
- h. DSHS strongly encourages consortium proposals that subcontract with organization(s) from hard to serve communities.
- i. Special consideration will be given to Bidders that can effectively serve the following priority groups:
  - (1) Refugee Cash Assistance (RCA) recipients
  - (2) Refugees who have been in the United States less than two (2) years.
  - (3) Ethnic groups who have been identified as having a significant number of individuals who are particularly hard to serve because of a lack of formal education, inability to communicate in English, and lack of work experience that facilitates a rapid entry into the US labor market. These hard-to-serve refugee groups have been identified as:
    - East African
    - Burmese
    - Bhutanese
- j. Any contract awarded is contingent upon the availability of funding and service needs.

#### **4. Minimum Qualifications**

This procurement is open to all eligible Bidders. To be eligible, a Bidder must:

- a. Be able to serve all eligible individuals as described in Exhibit D – Sample Statement of Works in a refugee's or immigrant's primary language and in culturally appropriate ways.
- b. Have at least one (1) year of experience within the past two (2) years, providing employment and/or language services to refugees and immigrants.
- c. Have the professional qualifications and licenses to perform the proposed LEP Pathway program services. (Example: a teaching certificate issued by the State of Washington for ESL certification or CASAS qualification for administering CASAS assessment tools.)
- d. Possess a current State of Washington business license.
- e. Have minimum hardware and software requirements to be able to use eJAS. Minimum hardware requirements include a computer with 56k modem and internet access. For security purposes minimum software requirements include Windows XP and Office 2007. Internet Explorer v7 is recommended.

A Bidder must meet minimum qualifications in order to be considered for an award under this RFQ. Bidders that do not meet minimum qualifications will be disqualified.

#### **5. Funding**

Approximately \$8.2 million is projected to be allocated for the LEP Pathway program for State Fiscal Year 2011 (SFY11) which starts on July 1, 2010 and ends June 30, 2011.

DSHS will allocate funds based on LEP population and service need in each region. (See Exhibit F – LEP Population by Region) DSHS reserves the right to change this based on proposals received.

#### **6. Auxiliary Aids and Services**

DSHS will provide access to this RFQ document to individuals with disabilities. Please contact the RFQ Coordinator to request auxiliary aids and services for this RFQ.

If an individual believes that the department has discriminated on the basis of a disability, please contact the DSHS Investigations Unit (IU) for the Nondiscrimination Policy Brochure and complaint process. The brochure can be found at <http://www.dshs.wa.gov/pdf/Publications/22-171.pdf>.



**7. Minority & Women's Business Enterprises (MWBE)**

In accordance with the legislative findings and policies set forth in RCW 39.19, the State of Washington encourages participation in all of its contracts by Minority & Women's Business Enterprises (MWBE) firms either self-identified or certified by the Office of Minority & Women's Business Enterprises (OMWBE). While the State does not give preferential treatment, it does seek equitable representation from the minority and women's business community.

Participation by MWBE contractors may be either on a direct basis in response to this RFQ or as a subcontractor to a contractor. However, no preference will be given in the evaluation of Proposals, no minimum level of MWBE participation shall be required, and Proposals will not be evaluated, rejected or considered non-responsive on that basis.

Bidders may contact the Office of Minority & Women's Business Enterprises (OMWBE) at <http://www.omwbe.wa.gov/index.shtml> to obtain information on certified firms for potential sub-contracting arrangements or for information on how to become certified.

Nothing in this section is intended to prevent or discourage participation from non MWBE firms, as well as MWBE firms.

**8. Definitions.** The following terms which appear in this RFQ have the meaning that is defined below for the purposes of this RFQ:

- a. Afghan Special Immigrants – A citizen or national of Afghanistan who is granted special immigrant status under 101(a) (27) of the Immigration and Nationality Act. Afghan Special Immigrant Status holders and their family are eligible for services up to eight months.
- b. Amerasians – An individual born in Vietnam after January 1, 1962 and before January 1, 1976 who was fathered by a US Citizen.
- c. Apparently Successful Bidder - A Bidder selected as having submitted a successful Proposal, based on the final determination of DSHS management taking into consideration the Bidder's final Proposal score and which Proposal(s) best meet the needs of DSHS. The Bidder is considered an "Apparently" Successful Bidder until a contract is finalized and executed.
- d. Asylee – An individual who is physically present in the U.S. or at a boarder or port of entry and who has been granted political asylum by the U.S. Attorney General. An applicant for political asylum does not meet the immigration status requirement for Refugee Assistance until asylum has been granted.
- e. Bidder - An individual, organization, public or private agency, or other entity submitting a Proposal in response to this RFQ.

- f. Community Service (CS) - A structured unpaid work activity in which LEP TANF parents work for the direct benefit of the community under the support of public or non-profit organizations.
- g. Consortium – An association of two or more organizations with the objective of participating in a common activity or pooling their resources for achieving a common goal by contracting with DSHS. A consortium has a primary contractor that contracts directly with DSHS and sub-contracts with other consortium members to provide services.
- h. Contractor – Individual or Company whose Proposal has been accepted by the Agency and is awarded a fully executed, written contract.
- i. Core Activity – A WorkFirst activity countable toward the federal TANF participation rate. Individuals must be in a 20 hour per week countable core activity to receive non-core activity services.
- j. CSO – The Community Service Office where individuals apply for TANF and are assigned to a WorkFirst Case Manager or Refugee Social Worker.
- k. Cuban/Haitian Entrant – A national of Cuba or Haiti who (1) was paroled into the U.S. or (2) was paroled for criminal prosecution or to give testimony, or has a pending case, or applied for asylum status.
- l. DSHS – The Washington State Department of Social and Health Services, and the entity issuing this RFQ. Also referred to as the Agency or the Department.
- m. eJAS – The DSHS automated case management tool for WorkFirst programs available through a DSHS secure website.
- n. ESL – English as a Second Language. English courses provided to individuals whose primary language is not English.
- o. Full-Time Participation – Participating in approved WorkFirst activities 32 to 40 hours per week.
- p. Iraqi Special Immigrant - A citizen or national of Iraq who is granted special immigrant status under 101(a) (27) of the Immigration and Nationality Act. Iraqi Special Immigrant Status holders and their family are eligible for services up to eight months.
- q. Issue - To mail, post or otherwise release this RFQ as a public document to interested parties.
- r. Key Personnel - Staff being proposed to do the work under this Proposal.
- s. LEP Pathway – Employment and language services to refugees and WorkFirst parents with limited English proficiency.

- t. Office of Refugee Resettlement (ORR) - The federal office that administers the refugee program in the US.
- u. Primary Contractor – The consortium member contracting directly with DSHS sub-contracting with other consortium members to provide services and billing DSHS for services.
- v. Proposal - All material prepared and assembled by a Bidder, and which the Bidder submits in response to this RFQ.
- w. Protest - An objection by the Bidder, in writing, protesting the results of this RFQ, and which complies with all requirements of this RFQ.
- x. RCA – Refugee Cash Assistance. A federally funded program that provides cash and medical assistance to single individuals or childless couples granted refugee status, who meets program income and resource requirements for up to eight months from the date of arrival.
- y. RCW - Revised Code of Washington. (All references to RCW chapters or sections shall include any successor, amended, or replacement statute.)
- z. Refugee – Persons who are unable to return to their home country because of race, religion, nationality, membership in a particular social group, or political opinion. For purposes of this RFQ, the term “refugee” also refers to individuals with any of the following immigration statuses as defined by federal law:
  - Refugees;
  - Asylees;
  - Victims of Human Trafficking
  - Amerasians
  - Cuban-Haitian Entrants
  - Iraqi/Afghani Special Immigrants
- aa. RFQ- Request for Qualifications issued for the purpose of obtaining proposals from bidders seeking to contract with DSHS to provide client services;
- bb. RFQ Coordinator The sole point of contact within DSHS regarding this RFQ for potential Bidders and other interested parties.
- cc. Skills Training – Work-related training that enhances an individual’s employability by providing instructions and teaching specific skills that are marketable to employers.
- dd. Statement of Work - Services which the Contractor is to perform under any contract awarded, and which is generally in the form of an exhibit attached to the contract.
- ee. Subcontractor – An organization that contracts with a Primary Contractor to provide services to eligible clients.

- ff. Submit - To deliver to the DSHS RFQ Coordinator any of several documents described in this RFQ and in the manner specified in this RFQ.
- gg. TANF – Temporary Assistance to Needy Families, a federal assistance program that provides cash assistance to low-income families with dependent children.
- hh. Victim of Human Trafficking – A person who has been trafficked into the U.S. and forced into the international sex trade, prostitution, slavery and/or forced labor through coercion, threats of physical violence, psychological abuse, torture and imprisonment.
- ii. VOLAG – Voluntary resettlement agencies with cooperative agreement with the Department of State responsible for the initial resettlement of refugees.
- jj. WAC - Washington Administrative Code. (All references to WAC chapters or sections shall include any successor, amended, or replacement regulation.)
- kk. WEBS – Washington’s Electronic Business Solution. DSHS encourages all bidders to register with WEBS at <http://www.ga.wa.gov/Webs/>.
- ll. Work Experience (WEX) – A structured unpaid work activity, which offers an opportunity for parents to practice or expand their work skills in a supportive and flexible work environment in a public or nonprofit organization.
- mm. WorkFirst – Washington State’s welfare-to-work strategy. It is based on the belief that work is better than welfare. Work provides the best opportunity for families to raise their income and leave poverty.

## SECTION B. PROCUREMENT PROCESS

### 9. Procurement Contact Information

Upon release of this RFQ, all communications concerning this RFQ must be directed only to the RFQ Coordinator listed below. Any communication directed to DSHS staff or consultants, other than the RFQ Coordinator, may result in disqualification.

Contact: Charles Barron, RFQ Coordinator  
Department of Social & Health Services  
Community Services Division

Mailing Address: P.O. Box 45470  
Olympia, WA 98504-5470

Physical Address: 712 Pear Street  
Olympia WA 98501

Telephone: 360-725-4528

FAX 360-725-4905

E-mail Address: [charles.barron@dshs.wa.gov](mailto:charles.barron@dshs.wa.gov)

### 10. Acceptance of RFQ Terms

The Bidder acknowledges that the submission of a Proposal which includes a signed Bidder Certification and Assurances Form, attached as Exhibit A, constitutes a binding offer.

### 11. Procurement Schedule

The Procurement Schedule outlines the tentative schedule for important action dates and times. All dates after the proposal submission due date are approximate and may be adjusted as conditions indicate, without amending this document. It is the Bidder's sole responsibility to periodically check the DSHS procurement website, and/or WEBS, for amendments to this document.

**Figure 1. PROCUREMENT SCHEDULE**

Item	Action	Date
1.	DSHS Issues RFQ	December 15, 2009
2.	Bidders Conference	January 6, 2010
3.	Bidder may submit written questions until 5:00 p.m. Pacific Time	January 8, 2010
4.	DSHS will Issue responses to Bidders' questions.	January 15, 2010.
5.	Bidder must submit Proposal by 3:00 p.m. Pacific Time	February 25, 2010
6.	DSHS evaluation of Proposals	March 1, 2010- March 3, 2010
7.	Bidder Oral Interview if determined to be necessary by DSHS	March 10, 2010 – March 19, 2010
8.	DSHS notifies Apparently Successful Bidders and begins contract negotiations	March 26, 2010
9.	DSHS notifies unsuccessful Bidders	March 26, 2010
10.	Bidders may request Debriefing until 4:00 p.m. Pacific Time	April 2, 2010
11.	DSHS holds debriefing conferences, if requested	April 9, 2010
12.	Unsuccessful Bidders may submit Protest(s) until 4:00 p.m. Pacific Time	April 16, 2010
13.	DSHS considers and responds to any Protests	April 23, 2010
14.	Contract Execution	Anticipated June 30, 2010

## **12. Contract**

DSHS intends to award multiple contract(s) to provide the services described in this RFQ. DSHS will award contracts based on LEP population and service need in each region. (See Exhibit E – DSHS Region Map and Exhibit F – LEP Pathway Program Statewide TANF/RCA Adults by Region)

Current LEP Pathway contractors interested in continuing to provide services under this RFQ are required to submit a proposal for consideration. There is no guarantee of an award to a current contractor.

The term of the Contract will commence upon the start date July 1, 2010 or execution date, whichever is later, with the end date of June 30, 2011. Amendments extending the period of performance, if any, shall be at the sole discretion of DSHS.

Additional services that are appropriate to the scope of this RFQ as determined by DSHS may be added to the resulting contract by a written amendment mutually agreed to and executed by both parties.

DSHS is interested in contracting to meet the needs of the refugee population within each region. In the event that the DSHS does not receive adequate proposals that meet the needs of the program, DSHS reserves the right to contract directly with an organization(s) to provide services to address the need.

## **13. Ethics**

Specific restrictions apply to contracting with current or former state employees pursuant to chapter 42.52 of the Revised Code of Washington. Bidders should familiarize themselves with the requirements prior to submitting a Proposal.

## **14. Insurance**

The Apparently Successful Bidder must comply with the insurance requirements identified in the sample terms and conditions attached hereto as an exhibit. (See Exhibit C – Sample Contracts Terms and Conditions)

## **15. Proprietary Information/Public Disclosure**

Materials submitted in response to this RFQ shall become the property of DSHS and the proposals shall be deemed public records as defined by RCW 42.56.

The Bidder's Proposal must include a statement on the Letter of Submittal identifying the pages of its Proposal, if any, which contain information the Bidder considers proprietary. Each page claimed to be proprietary must be clearly marked by printing the word "Proprietary" on the lower right hand corner. Bidders may not mark their entire Proposal proprietary.

If DSHS receives a request to view or copy a Bidder's Proposal, DSHS will respond according to applicable law and DSHS' policy governing public disclosure. DSHS will not disclose any information marked "Proprietary" in a Proposal without giving the Bidder ten (10) days notice to seek a relief in superior court per RCW 42.56.540.

**16. Communications**

All communications concerning this RFQ must be directed only to the RFQ Coordinator. Any communication directed to DSHS staff or consultants, other than the RFQ Coordinator, may result in disqualification. Proposals should be based on the material contained in this RFQ, any related amendment(s), and any questions and answers directed through the RFQ Coordinator.

**17. Bidders Conference**

A Bidders Conference will be held by teleconference on Wednesday, January 6, 2010 from 9:30 a.m. to 11:30 a.m. Pacific Time. Bidders are not required to attend this teleconference but are encouraged to attend.

If Bidders are planning on participating in this teleconference, please RSVP no later than 3:00 p.m. Pacific Time, Tuesday, January 5, 2010 by contacting the RFQ Coordinator.

At the scheduled time of the Bidders Conference, bidders must call the following number: 360-407-3780 and then enter the participants pin number 673737#.

Questions asked at the teleconference and the oral answers provided by DSHS at the teleconference are unofficial and not binding on DSHS until they are posted on the DSHS Procurement website.

**18. Questions and Answers**

Bidders may fax, e-mail, or mail written questions to the RFQ Coordinator. Questions will be accepted until the date set forth in the Procurement Schedule. Early submission of questions is encouraged. Questions and answers will be posted on the DSHS Procurement website. Bidders may only rely on written statements Issued by the RFQ Coordinator. Any oral communications are unofficial and are not binding on DSHS.

**19. RFQ Amendments**

DSHS reserves the right, at any time before execution of a contract, to amend all, or a portion, of this RFQ. Amendments will be posted on the DSHS Procurements Web site and/or WEBS. If there is any conflict between amendments or between an amendment and this document, whichever document was issued last in time shall be controlling.

**20. Retraction of this RFQ**

DSHS reserves the right to retract this RFQ in whole, or in part, at any time without penalty.

**21. Submission and Contents of Proposals**

**a. Submission of Proposal**

Proposals must be prepared and submitted no later than the proposal submission date and time specified in the Procurement Schedule. The Proposal is to be sent to



the RFQ Coordinator, either by mail or hand delivery, at the address specified in Section B.9, Procurement Contact Information. DSHS will not accept any Proposal submitted by fax. DSHS will not accept any Proposal submitted by email.

Bidders should allow sufficient time to ensure timely receipt by the RFQ Coordinator. Bidders assume the risk for the method of delivery and for any delay in the mailing or delivery of the Proposal. DSHS will disqualify any Proposal and withdraw it from consideration if it is received after the proposal submission due date and time.

All Proposals and any accompanying documentation and material become the property of DSHS and will not be returned.

b. Format of Proposal

(1) The Proposal must be submitted on standard eight and one-half by eleven inch (8 ½" x 11") white paper, with one (1) inch margins, in Arial font, size 11.

(2) The Proposal must be single-sided, page numbered, and stapled.

(3) Major sections of the Proposal must be clearly separated.

c. Bidders must use the Proposal Template (Exhibit G) for their response to Section 2: Management, Experience and Qualifications Proposal and Section 3: Technical Proposal.

d. Contents of Proposal

(1) The Proposal's front cover page must provide the following information:

- The name of the Bidder's organization,
- Address,
- Contact person and contact information,
- RFQ # 0913-0002 Limited English Proficient Pathway.
- Identify the Proposal as a "Sole Proposal" or "Consortium Proposal".

(2) Following the cover page, the Proposals must address the sections of this RFQ in the same order as presented here, with the same headings.

- Table of Contents
- Section 1: Administrative Requirements.
- Section 2: Management, Experience and Qualifications Proposal
- Section 3: Technical Proposal

- (3) The Bidder must submit one (1) Proposal marked “Original” and five (5) copies marked “Copy.” All copies must be identical in content to the “Original” as the evaluators will only be evaluating the copies.

**22. Non-responsive Proposals**

All Proposals will be reviewed by the RFQ Coordinator to determine compliance with administrative requirements and instructions specified in this RFQ. DSHS may reject or withdraw a Proposal at any time as nonresponsive for any of the following reasons:

- a. Bidder does not meet minimum qualifications
- b. Incomplete Proposal
- c. Submission of a proposal that proposes services that deviate from the technical requirements set forth in this document
- d. Failure to comply with any part of this RFQ or any exhibit to this RFQ.
- e. Submission of incorrect, misleading, or false information

**23. Minor Irregularities**

DSHS may waive minor administrative irregularities related to any Proposal.

**24. Cost to Prepare Proposal**

DSHS will not be liable for any costs incurred by the Bidder in preparing, submitting, or presenting a Proposal for this RFQ.

**25. Consortium Proposals**

No more than one proposal will be accepted for a consortium, with one member of the consortium submitting the proposal on behalf of all consortium members. For consortium proposals, with one or more other organization(s), the Bidder will be designated as the primary contractor. The primary contractor will be the DSHS sole point of contact, will sign the contract and any amendments, will sub-contract with the other consortium members and will bear sole responsibility for performance under the contract.

**26. Exhibits**

Exhibits to this RFQ are:

- Exhibit A - Bidder Certification and Assurances Form
- Exhibit B – Bidder’s Checklist
- Exhibit C – Sample Contracts Terms and Conditions
- Exhibit D - Sample Statement of Works
- Exhibit E – DSHS Region Map
- Exhibit F – LEP Population by Region
- Exhibit G – Proposal Template (*Mandatory Use*)

Bidders should download a complete copy of this RFQ and all attached exhibits, as listed above. The procurement documents can be accessed at the DSHS Procurement Website at <http://www1.dshs.wa.gov/msa/ccs/> or General Administration WEBS at <https://fortress.wa.gov/ga/webscust>.

Bidders who experience difficulty downloading the documents should contact the RFQ Coordinator.

## **27. Withdrawal of Proposals**

After a Proposal has been submitted, a Bidder may withdraw its Proposal at any time up to the proposal submission date and time specified in the Procurement Schedule. A written request to withdraw the Proposal, signed by an authorized representative of the Bidder, must be submitted to the RFQ Coordinator. After withdrawing a Proposal, the Bidder may submit another Proposal at any time up to the proposal submission date and time.

## **28. Notify Bidders**

DSHS will notify the Apparently Successful Bidder in writing of its selection on or about the date and time specified in the Procurement Schedule, via mail, e-mail and/or fax. DSHS will also notify unsuccessful Bidders on or about the date and time specified in the Procurement Schedule.

## **29. Bidder Debriefing Conference**

All Bidders may request a debriefing conference by submitting a request in writing to the RFQ Coordinator by mail or fax by the date specified in the Procurement Schedule.

Debriefing conferences will be held in accordance with the Procurement Schedule. A debriefing conference may, at DSHS's option, be conducted either in person or by telephone and are limited to a maximum of one hour in length.

Discussion at the debriefing conference will be limited to the following:

- Critique of Proposal based on evaluators' comments; and
- Review of final score in comparison with other Bidders' final scores without identifying the other Bidders.

DSHS will not identify the other Bidders or allow review of their Proposals or evaluations during debriefing.

## **30. Protest**

In order to Submit a Protest under this RFQ, a Bidder must have submitted a Proposal for this RFQ, and must have requested and participated in a debriefing conference.

This protest process is the sole administrative remedy available within DSHS. The following is the process for filing a Protest:

a. Grounds for Protest. A Protest may be made based on these grounds only:

- (1) Mathematical errors were made by DSHS in computing the score;
- (2) DSHS failed to follow the procedures established in this RFQ document, or to follow applicable State or federal laws or regulations; or
- (3) Bias, discrimination, or conflict of interest on the part of an evaluator.

b. Protest Form and Content

A Protest must state all of the facts and arguments upon which the Protest is based, and the grounds for the Protest. It must be in writing and signed by a person authorized to bind the Bidder to a contractual relationship. At a minimum, the Protest must include:

- (1) The name of the protesting Bidder, mailing address and phone number, and the name of the individual responsible for submission of the Protest;
- (2) The RFQ number and title;
- (3) A detailed and complete statement of the specific action(s) by DSHS under protest;
- (4) The grounds for the Protest;
- (5) Description of the relief or corrective action requested.

Bidders may attach to their Protest any documentation they have to offer in support.

c. Submitting a Protest

Protests must be in writing and must be signed. Bidders must mail or hand deliver their Protest to the RFQ Coordinator. Protests may not be submitted by fax or email. DSHS must receive the written Protest within five (5) business days after the debriefing conference.

d. Protest Process

The RFQ Coordinator will forward the Protest to the DSHS designated Protest Coordinator with copies of the following:

- (1) This RFQ and any amendments,
- (2) The protesting Bidder's Proposal,
- (3) The evaluators' scoring sheets, and
- (4) Any other documents showing evaluation and scoring of the Proposal in question.

DSHS will follow these procedures in reviewing a Protest:

DSHS will conduct an objective review of the Protest, based on the contents of the written Protest and the above materials provided by the RFQ Coordinator.

DSHS will send the Protestor a written decision within five (5) business days after DSHS receives the Protest, unless more time is required to review the Protest and make a determination. The protesting Bidder will be notified by the RFQ Coordinator if additional time is necessary.

DSHS will make a final determination of the Protest and will either:

- (1) Find that the Protest lacks merit and uphold DSHS's actions; or
- (2) Find that any errors in the RFQ process or in DSHS's conduct did not influence the outcome of the RFQ, and uphold DSHS's actions; or
- (3) Find merit in the Protest and provide options for corrective action by DSHS which may include:
  - That DSHS correct any errors and re-evaluate all Proposals affected by its determination of the Protest;
  - That DSHS reissue the RFQ document; or
  - That DSHS make other findings and take such other action as may be appropriate.

### **31. Execution of the Contract**

The Apparently Successful Bidder is expected to sign a contract with DSHS and any subsequent amendments that may be required to address specific work or services as needed.

DSHS reserves the right to negotiate the specific wording of the Statement of Work, based on the requirements of this RFQ and the terms of the winning Proposal.

If the Apparently Successful Bidder fails or refuses to sign the contract or any subsequent amendment within ten (10) business days of delivery, DSHS may elect to cancel the award and may award the contract to the next-highest ranked finalist.

Any subcontracts necessary to perform the contract shall be subject to the prior written approval of DSHS.

## SECTION C. PROPOSAL CONTENTS

The Bidder must answer all questions and must include all items requested in the order requested for the Proposal to be considered responsive. The Bidder must address every section of the RFQ, even though certain items may not be scored.

### **1. Administrative Requirements (Section 1 of the Proposal)**

The Bidder must respond to each item in the same order in which they appear.

#### **a. Letter of Submittal**

Bidders must include a signed Letter of Submittal on Bidder's official business letterhead stationery as the first page of Section 1. Signing the Letter of Submittal indicates that the Bidder accepts the terms and conditions of RFQ 0913-0002 Limited English Proficient (LEP) Pathway.

The Bidder's Letter of Submittal must include the following:

- (1) The following information for the individual's or legal entities with whom the contract would be written or legal entities.
  - Name,
  - Address,
  - Principal place of business,
  - Telephone number,
  - Fax number, and
  - E-mail address;
- (2) The name of the Bidder's contact person for this RFQ;
- (3) A list of the LEP Pathway program's Statement of Work(s) and service(s) the Bidder wants to perform;
- (4) A detailed list of all materials and enclosures included in the Proposal;
- (5) A list of all RFQ amendments downloaded by the Bidder from the DSHS Procurements Web site and/or WEBS, if applicable, and listed in order by amendment number and date. If there are no RFQ amendments, the Bidder must include a statement to that effect;
- (6) A statement substantiating that the person who signs the letter is authorized to contractually bind the Bidder's organization;
- (7) A statement that a Certificate of Insurance and a current Washington State Business License would be provided as a condition of award;
- (8) Identification of the page numbers on the Bidder's Proposal that are marked "Proprietary or Confidential" Information; and

(9) Any statements describing variations between the Bidder's Proposal and the requirements of this RFQ.

b. Bidder Certification and Assurances Form

Bidders must submit a completed Bidder Certification and Assurances Form, Exhibit A. Please sign and include any attachments that are necessary.

c. Reference

The Bidder must provide a list of at least three (3) references of entities for which the Bidder has performed similar services.

The references should include the names, telephone numbers, dates of services, and a brief description of the similar services the Bidder provided in the past. References will only be contacted for finalist(s).

**2. Management, Experience and Qualifications Proposal (Section 2 of the Proposal)**

General Requirements: In this section of the proposal, the Bidder is to describe project organization and the knowledge, skills, abilities, and experience of the proposed team members.

Proposal Template: The Bidder is required to use the Proposal Template (See Exhibit G) to respond to this section of the proposal. A reference to another section will not suffice, each answer must stand alone.

Points Awarded for Responses. The number in parentheses after each question or requirement represents the maximum number of points that may be awarded for the Bidder's response to that question or requirement.

**The total number of available points for this section is 40.**

- a. Is your organization submitting this proposal on behalf of a consortium? (Yes or No. Not Scored.) If you answered yes, please describe your organization's experience of managing a consortium. (Not Scored.)
- b. Is your organization or consortium able to serve all eligible individuals as described in Exhibit D – Sample Statement of Works in a refugee's or immigrant's primary language and in culturally appropriate ways? (Yes or No. Not Scored.)
- c. Does your organization or consortium have at least one (1) year of experience within the past two (2) years, providing employment and/or language services to refugees and immigrants? Yes or No. Not Scored.)
- d. Does your organization or consortium have the professional qualifications and certification to perform LEP Pathway program services? (Example includes a teaching certificate issued by the State of Washington for ESL or CASAS qualification for administering CASAS assessment tools.) (Yes or No. Not Scored.)

- e. Does your organization or consortium have a current State of Washington business license? (Yes or No. Not Scored.)
- f. Does your organization or consortium have the minimum hardware and software requirements to use eJAS? Minimum hardware requirements include a computer with 56k modem and internet access. For security purposes minimum software requirements include Windows XP and Office 2007. Internet Explorer v7 is. (Yes or No. Not Scored.)
- g. Provide a brief description of your organization's or each consortium member's history of working with low income limited English proficient individuals, refugee and immigrant populations and the services your organization provides. (20 points)
- h. Provide a detailed listing of key personnel for each service(s) you or your consortium wants to provide. Include title, brief job description, qualification(s) for the delivery of the service, and length of time working with refugee and immigrant populations. (20 points)

### **3. Technical Proposal (Section 3 of the Proposal)**

General Requirements: In this section of the Proposal, the Bidder is to provide a description of the Proposal which is consistent with the goals and objectives of the project and demonstrates the Bidder's understanding of the skills and resources required to successfully accomplish the objectives and requirements of the project.

Proposal Template: The Bidder is required to use the Proposal Template (See Exhibit G) to respond to this section of the proposal. A reference to another section will not suffice, each answer must stand alone.

Points Awarded for Responses. The number in parentheses after each question or requirement represents the maximum number of points that may be awarded for the Bidder's response to that question or requirement.

**The total number of available points for this section is 120.**

- a. Indicate the LEP Pathway service(s) your organization or consortium will provide, the number of clients that you think your organization/consortium can serve for each service(s) proposed, which DSHS Region and local area your organization or consortium will cover, the addresses where you provide the services and normal business hours. (Not Scored.)
- b. Describe how you will provide each LEP Pathway service you are proposing. If you are submitting a proposal on behalf of a consortium, please detail each consortium member's role and responsibilities and how they will provide the service(s). (40 points)
- c. Describe your organization's or consortium's ability to provide services to diverse populations and how your organization or consortium will ensure that services are provided in an individual's primary language and in a culturally appropriate manner. (25 points)



- d. Describe your success rate within the past year in achieving job placement and/or language level gain for low income LEP individuals, refugees and immigrants. Provide your job development and/or ESL strategies and the outcomes you achieved including the number of individuals served and number placed into jobs and the name(s) of employer(s) where you've had good success in making job placements and/or number of individuals achieving language level gains. (25 points)
- e. Explain how your organization or consortium will ensure that individuals from the priority groups (RCA recipients, newly arrived refugees, hard-to-serve) will be effectively served. Include a description of the specific and focused services you will provide that will achieve the key outcomes identified for these priority groups. (For example, do you have staff support for hard to serve groups, or are you planning on subcontracting with organizations that represent hard to serve communities, are you prioritizing services for RCA recipients, etc. The key outcomes are identified in this RFQ in Section A, Summary of Project, subsection 2, Background, (c) LEP Pathway Indicators of Success.) (30 points)

## SECTION D. EVALUATION

### 1. Evaluation Procedure

DSHS shall designate an evaluation team to review, evaluate and score Bidder Proposals. DSHS, at its sole discretion, will select Bidders for an oral presentation, if oral presentations are held. Evaluators will evaluate and score the oral presentations of Bidders selected.

### 2. Proposal Evaluation

DSHS will initially screen each Proposal to determine if the Bidder has complied with the stated Administrative Requirements and Submittal Instructions. If a Proposal does not meet all Administrative Requirements for this RFQ, DSHS may consider the Proposal non-responsive and may withdraw it from consideration at any time. If a Proposal meets all Administrative Requirements, evaluators will score and award points up to the maximum points available for each question.

### 3. Evaluation of Oral Interview

DSHS will schedule oral interviews. The RFQ Coordinator will notify Bidders of the date, time and location for their oral presentation. DSHS will select evaluators for the oral presentations based on their qualifications, experience, and background relevant to this RFQ.

### 4. Scoring of Proposals

The maximum number of evaluation points available is 200. The Administrative Requirements are evaluated on a pass/fail basis. The following weighting and points will be assigned to the Proposal for evaluation purposes:

#### **WRITTEN PROPOSAL**

Experience and Qualifications- 20%	40 Points
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Technical Proposal – 60%	120 Points
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<b>Sub-Total (for Written Proposal)</b>	<b>160 Points</b>
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Oral Presentations – 20%	40 Points
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References	(Pass/Fail)
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<b>TOTAL</b>	<b>200 Points</b>
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### 5. Final Determination of Apparently Successful Bidder(s)

DSHS program staff and/or management may conduct a final review of the evaluation and scoring of finalist(s).

In this final review, DSHS may consider past or current performance of any DSHS contracts by a finalist(s), and any experience of the program or DSHS in working with a finalist(s) under any past or current contract with DSHS.

DSHS management shall make the final determination as to which Bidder(s), initially designated as finalist(s), shall be officially selected and notified as the Apparently Successful Bidder(s).

In doing so, DSHS management shall be guided, but not bound, by the scores awarded by the evaluators. Program staff and DSHS management shall determine which Proposals reviewed during this final selection process will best meet the needs of DSHS and, specifically, the needs of the Economic Services Administration.

Any Bidder who would be an Apparently Successful Bidder based on the scores awarded by the evaluators, and who is not selected, shall be provided, upon request, the reasons why DSHS selected a Bidder with a lower final score.